

There is no Doubt that Protein Sources are Very Diverse and Most of Their Consumption Comes from Meat Sources

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Notes on Poultry Layer Life

Protein sources are highly diverse, with a significant portion coming from meat. According to 2023 statistics, there are 34.4 billion chickens worldwide, of which 8.3 billion are egg-laying. Many of these chickens are kept in small cages, but eggs, celebrated on World Egg Day, play a crucial role in nutrition and sustainability. This article explores important aspects of the life cycle of laying hens, focusing on their care and development.

Poultry, particularly laying hens, plays an essential role in food production, contributing to the protein supply through eggs. Understanding the life cycle of layers is crucial for efficient egg production and the well-being of the birds. This communication focuses on key points related to the rearing and production phases of laying hens.

General Information about Layer Birds

- Laying hens are light-weight chickens, typically reaching between 1250 and 1350 grams by 20 weeks, depending on the breed (e.g., Lohman, Bovans, High Line). Differences between these breeds are minor.
- The egg-laying cycle starts not on the farm, but from the first entry of eggs into the hatchery. Issues like improper humidity levels during hatching can lead to problems such as dehydration, kidney dysfunction, and electrolyte imbalances in chicks.
- Hatched chicks are able to eat, drink, and consume oxygen,

but their thermoregulatory system is underdeveloped in the first week. Temperature and humidity control are critical in this period, as any defects can result in chick mortality.

Egg Cycle Stages

The Egg-Laying Cycle is divided into Two Periods

Rearing (up to 18 weeks): During this phase, the hen goes through significant growth. The first 5 weeks are critical for body growth and the development of the immune system, while weeks 5 to 15 focus on skeletal growth and development of the oviduct, which is essential for egg production.

Production (up to 80 weeks): After the rearing phase, hens enter the production phase where they begin laying eggs. It's crucial to ensure that hens are adequately fortified by 100 days to avoid production issues later on.

Understanding the development and care of laying hens is essential for ensuring a high-quality egg production cycle. From the hatchery to maturity, proper management of temperature, humidity, and nutritional requirements will lead to healthier hens and more sustainable egg production.